

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 02420 101955Z
ACTION EB-08

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TAGS: EAIR, UK, FR
SUBJECT: CIVAIR: CONCORDE

1. PRESS REACTION TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY PORT AUTHORITY WOULD DEFER A CONCORDE DECISION TO MARCH 10 WAS LOW KEY WITH SPECULATION CENTERED AROUND WHETHER OR NOT BA AND AIR FRANCE WOULD PROCEED WITH THEIR COURT ACTION FEB 18. IN GENERAL, INDUSTRY OBSERVERS CONSIDERED IT LIKELY THAT THE CARRIERS WOULD DECIDE TO WAIT FOR THE PORT AUTHORITY ACTION MARCH 10 WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT AT LEAST A CONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF CONCORDE WOULD BE ANNOUNCED THEN. THE ONLY DIRECT APPROACH MADE TO THE EMBASSY IN CONNECTION WITH THE PORT AUTHORITY'S DEFERMENT HAS BEEN A UNION SPOKESMAN FOR THE BAC FACTORY AT BRISTOL WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN AEROSPACE. HE ASKED TO VISIT THE CIVIL AIR ATTACHE FEB 17 WITH ANOTHER BRITISH UNION REPRESENTATIVE AND THREE AEROSPATIALE WORKERS REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS CONCORDE'S LANDING RIGHTS IN THE US. A REPORT OF THIS MEETING WILL BE SENT TO THE DEPT.

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PAGE 02 LONDON 02420 101955Z

2. THE PRESS FEB 10 REPORTED THE PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED TO PARLIAMENT EVENING FEB 9 THAT THE BRITISH AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS AT WASHINGTON HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO APPROACH THE US GOVERNMENT TO MAKE KNOWN THEIR CONCERN ABOUT FURTHER DELAYS IN CONCORDE'S ENTRY INTO NEW YORK. THESE REPORTS IMPLIED A LINKAGE (WHICH WE FOUND WAS INCORRECT) BETWEEN THE UNEXPECTED ACTION BY THE NEW YORK

STATE SENATE IN APPROVING A RESOLUTION FEB 9 CALLING ON THE PORT AUTHORITY TO PREVENT LANDINGS OF CONCORDE AT NEW YORK AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT.

3. ANOTHER CONCORDE DEVELOPMENT RECEIVING PRESS COVERAGE FEB 10 IS THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN BRITISH AIRWAYS AND BRANIFF, TO BE SIGNED IN DALLAS FEB 11, UNDER WHICH THE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE LEASED TO BRANIFF FOR SUB-SONIC OPERATIONS BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND DALLAS. A SIMILAR AGREEMENT WITH AIR FRANCE IS ALSO EXPECTED. WHILE THE AIRLINES CLAIM THERE WOULD BE A TIME SAVINGS OF ABOUT SIX HOURS, ABOUT 50 PERCENT, IN THE LONDON/DALLAS FLIGHT, ONE REPORT POINTS OUT THE ACTUAL TIME SAVINGS WHEN COMPARED TO A LONDON/WASHINGTON FLIGHT ON THE PRESENT CONCORDE SERVICE WITH CONNECTION TO PRESENT SUB-SONIC SERVICE TO DALLAS WOULD BE ONLY ABOUT 20 MINUTES.

4. THE TIMES REPORT OF THE BA/BRANIFF AGREEMENT ALSO POINTS OUT REALISTICALLY THAT THE PROPOSED SERVICE WOULD LIKELY BE HELD UP FOR SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE US AUTHORIZATION IS OBTAINED.

5. COMMENT: DEPT OF TRADE OFFICER HANDLING CONCORDE LANDING RIGHTS ISSUES (OWNE KEMMIS) TOLD US THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT WAS NOT RELATED TO THE NEW YORK SENATE ACTION. IN FACT, DEPT OF TRADE HAD NOT SEEN REPORTS OF THE NEW YORK SENATE ACTION AT THE TIME WE MENTIONED IT TO THEM. KEMMIS SAID CALAGHAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT WAS A FOLLOWUP TO DISCUSSIONS WITH VICE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LONDON 02420 101955Z

PRESIDENT MONDALE DURING HIS VISIT TO LONDON AND APPROACHES FRENCH AND BRITISH AMBASSADORS HAVE RECENTLY MADE IN WASHINGTON. THESE, HE CONFIRMED, WILL BE FOLLOWED UP BY FURTHER APPROACHES BY THE TWO AMBASSADORS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. ARMSTRONG

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